

# Visual Strategies for Young Children who are DHH and their Families

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# Agenda

research

application

resources

Why is developing and training eye  
gaze so important for children who are  
DHH?



# All caregivers and all babies:

- engage in periods of sustained visual gaze
- engage in coordinated or systematic attention switching between objects (or events) and social partner

Waxman & Spencer (1997)



[http://farm1.static.flickr.com/25/103233289\\_cac85abf0a.jpg?v=0](http://farm1.static.flickr.com/25/103233289_cac85abf0a.jpg?v=0)

Starting around 6 - 18 mos, infants start to visually explore their worlds and start developing the ability to divide their attention between objects and social partners, often looking back and forth repeatedly.

(Waxman, Spencer, & Poisson, 1996)



[http://www.mybaby.com/content/information/begin/get\\_their\\_attention.jpg](http://www.mybaby.com/content/information/begin/get_their_attention.jpg)

Hearing children visually explore their worlds while their caregivers input information orally.

Deaf/HH children visually explore their worlds while caregivers input information visually.



# Parents of D/HH can and should nurture this visual exploration by:

allowing the child to observe an object/event, waiting for the child to re-establish eye contact, then providing meaningful communication related to the object/event

allowing the child to observe an object/event, then providing meaningful communication related to the object/event within the field of vision

directing a child's gaze toward an object/event, waiting for the child to re-establish eye contact, then providing meaningful communication related to the object/event

tapping and/or waving to gain visual attention to provide language input on an object/event

# "directing" or "controlling" eye gaze for children: 6 strategies identified in research

tapping the child and/or object

reposition the child to visually show the behavior

"molding" signs for the child

signing on the body

moving into child's field of vision

waiting till child looks to start communication

Loots & Devise (2003)



Research indicates parents/caregivers naturally increase the amount of time spent waiting for their child to re-establish eye contact

also, they naturally increase the complexity of language input (i.e. scaffolding) to match the child's language level

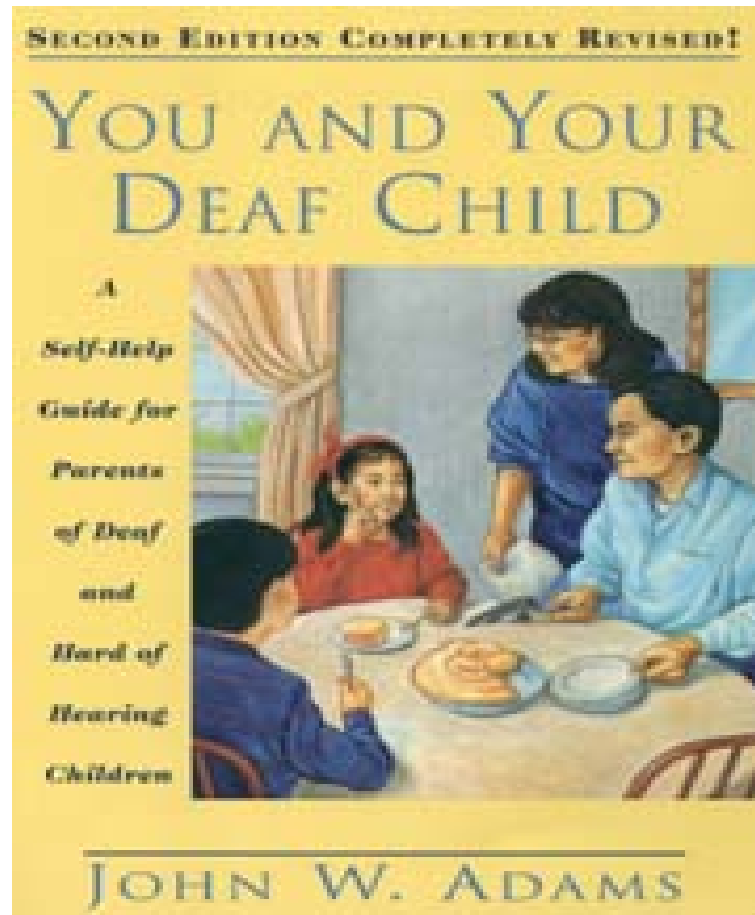
Let's see what this looks like in practice:

View the following clip. What visual strategies do you notice?

# You and Your Deaf Child

A Self-Help Guide for Parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

By John W. Adams



# Parent and Child

- Make eye contact
- Maintain your child's visual attention
- Orient visually
- Follow your child's communication interaction

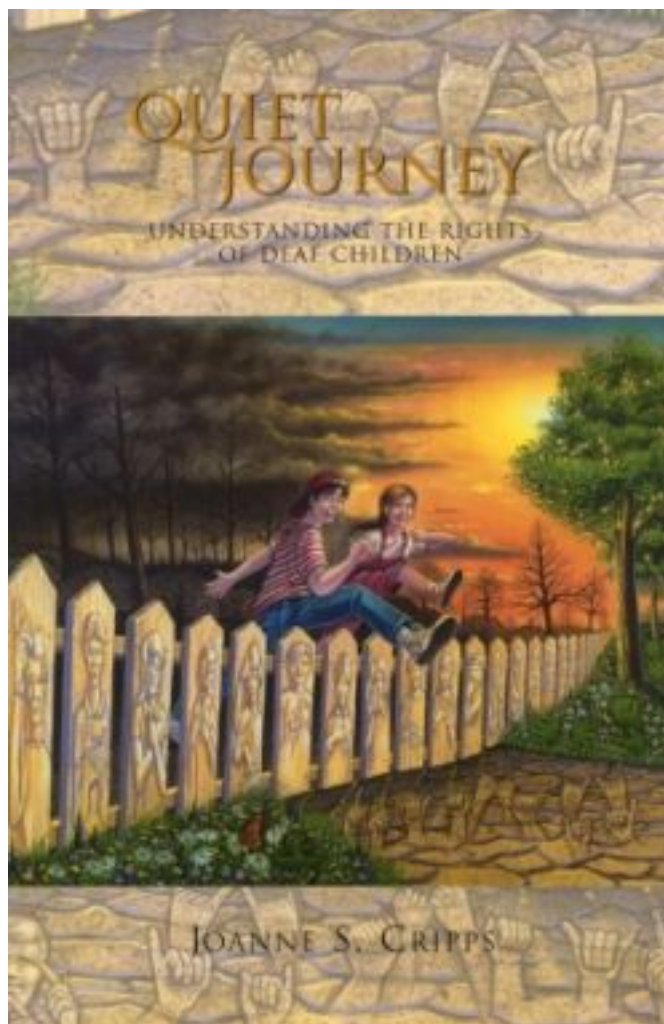
# Points to remember

- Communication interactions through routines like playtime, games, dinner and bedtime.
- Involve all family members in communication
- A family with a Deaf child is a Deaf and Hearing family unit

# Quiet Journey

## Understanding the Rights of Deaf Children

By Joanne S. Cripps



# How can parents help Deaf children feel included?

- \*Use visible communication

- Ensuring your Deaf child to communicate with all family members.

- \*Provide opportunities for your Deaf child to participate equally in your home

- flashing light for doorbell, fire alarm for phone/ TDD/videophone and TV with closed captioned

- \*Involve your Deaf child with his or her peers

- play groups, deaf camps, festivals, picnics, deaf clubs, and movie with captions

- \*Learn about events that are occurring in the Deaf world

- \* Expose your Deaf child to everything.

# Early Visual Communication Program

- Most current research on Deaf parents and their communication with their young children.
- Tips on using visual gestures / communication with your Deaf child in ensuring their language acquisition.
- WESDPHH's Deaf Mentors can provide this program for your family.



# Resources

ASL / Deaf Studies and Culture games

[www.deafplanet.com](http://www.deafplanet.com)

[www.aslrose.com](http://www.aslrose.com)

[www.aslpro.com](http://www.aslpro.com)

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